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The New 'Peace Team'

IN A DISTRUSTFUL world, the job of disarmament negotiator has thus far not amounted to much—Harold Stassen's noble efforts to make it important notwithstanding. In fact, Mr. Stassen made people nervous with his eager-beaver attempt to break the long-standing East-West arms deadlock. They were afraid that in his anxiety to show results he might end up leaving the U.S. with nothing but Cupid's darts as defense against the Russians.

That was an injustice to Mr. Stassen, of course, an exaggeration of his power and influence in the field of national arms policy. But at least there will be no grounds for such nervousness about the man President Eisenhower has named as America's new disarmament representative—James J. Wadsworth, deputy U.S. delegation chief at the U.N. for the past five years.

Mr. Wadsworth has been 20 years in the federal service in subordinate posts. He is not known to harbor presidential ambitions and presumably can be counted on not to kick over the traces. But his own capacity and personality—and he is said to be at least as persuasive and charming as Mr. Stassen—is not what ends worry lest the U.S. accept a Trojan Horse in its disarmament dickering with Russia.

What gives this reassurance to those who might have been worried about Mr. Stassen is the lineup of civilian advisers who have been named to assist Mr. Wadsworth—distinguished men, experienced in high government positions, and all of them of a gimlet-eyed practicality. There could be no thought of naivete and unrealism about military matters on the part of such individuals as Gen. Alfred Gruenther, who commanded NATO; Gen. Walter Bedell Smith, former CIA director and undersecretary of state; John J. McCloy, banker and ex-high commissioner in West Germany; and Robert Lovett, banker, ex-Secretary of Defense, ex-undersecretary of state.

Mr. Wadsworth and his "peace team" will function under Secretary of State Dulles, but the powerful battery of advisers dulls the suspicion that Mr. Dulles has simply acquired a tame replacement for the obstreperous Mr. Stassen. Not only does the Gruenther-Smith-McCloy-Lovett combine still fear that we will do anything silly in arms negotiations but it also raises the hope that perhaps this hard-headed group of men can figure out a way to take that first step toward controlled disarmament for which the world is still waiting.

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